Shri Mathew Panickar which appeared in the Week dated 30th June, 2002 to the effect that countries like India pay for their imports of middle east crude oil, on an average, Dollar 1 to Dollar 1.5 more than countries of Europe and America;

(b) if so, what are the reasons for this phenomenon; and

(c) whether Government will undertake effetive measures to get this differential price removed?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI SANTOSH GANGWAR): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The Official Selling Price (OSP) of the National Oil Companies (NOCs) of the Middle East countries is a market related price, announced by the NOCs on a month to month basis. This price is uniformly applicable to all the customers in a particular region *viz.* OSP for Asia is applicable to India, Japan, China, Korea etc. The OSP of a given crude oil for any region is based on a specific formula/marker crude oil price pertaining to that region and is, therefore, different for different regions.

(c) In view of (b) above, no action needs to be taken.

Securing of Oil and Gas supplies by India

2189. SHRI K. NATWAR SINGH:
DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY:

Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether India and China race to secure future oil and gas supplies to meet the rising domestic needs;

(b) if so, whether there is a proposal for energy highway from Russia and Central Asia through China;

(c) whether there is keen interest among Global companies including India's exploration major Oil and Natural Gas Corporation to get equity stake in the CIS countries;

(d) if so, whether any concrete steps in this regard have been worked out; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI SANTOSH GANGWAR): (a) and (b) Companies from India and China along with other countries sometimes bid for particular exploration blocks or fields abroad. Technical feasibility of transportation of energy, crude oil and natural gas, from Russia and Central Asia through China has not been established so far.

(c) to (e) ONGC-Videsh Ltd. (OVL), a 100% subsidiary of Oil and Natural Gas Corporation Ltd. (ONGC), is active in securing equity oil abroad in various countries, including the countries comprising Confederation of Independent States like Russia, Kazakhstan, Azerbaijan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan. In 2001, OVL obtained 20% stake in Sakhalin-I project of Russia with an estimated investment of about Rs. 8,500 crores.

Entry of Gail in LPG retailing

2190. DR. ABRAR AHMED: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Gas Authority of India Limited plan to move into the retail marketing of LPG;

(b) whether it would adversely affect the investment that the Indian Oil Corporation has made in developing its own marketing network based on supplies from GAIL pipelines;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) what is Govenrment's reaction thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI SANTOSH GANGWAR): (a) GAIL has sought the permission from the Government to sell LPG directly to bulk customers.

(b) to (d) Government have not taken any final view on the proposal.

Allocation of Natural Gas to Andhra Pradesh

2191. SHRI NANDI YELLAIAH: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Andhra Pradesh has recommended to the Central